

Mother, mother

She liked working
in the kitchen. She liked it
as much as criminals like pounding
out license plates. A long
hard, drab line of like.
It blinded her,
in that house, in her work.
She made cookies and cakes
and built walls. Walls
that she liked building.
I didn't like tearing them down,
I had to. I had to go
into that house, through that kitchen,
in that bathroom, her shrine
to perfect womanhood and show her.
I entered it. He entered me.
She did not notice. She knelt by the tub
that pink, porcelain alter. She was my
priest.
"Forgive me father for I have sinned."
Water ran from the font in a loud silence.
It was not like the sanctuary. It
would not cleanse me. Nothing
would cleanse me. I did it, mother.
He forced me and now I force you to see.
"Let the children come to me."
I never came – to you. I came
to him. I did not like it. She did not
like seeing it. I gave her my weight,
my burden to carry like a cross

across her back. I did not like the truth
and the noisy silence as the water
gurgled down the drain, and flushed
into the pipes, hidden
in the walls of our house.

-Alicia LaMagdeleine

